



St. Paul's Lutheran Church & School
- a Family to Whom You Belong -
Our Mission is to: **Make More & Better Disciples**

FOURTH MIDWEEK OF LENT (12:15 p.m. Wednesday, March 18, 2026)

Servants of God's House Today:

Vacancy Pastor: Rev. James Travis

Organist: Paulette Schmidt

Usher: Doug Lehr

WELCOME! We are glad that you are here worshipping God with us. We pray for God's blessings to you and invite you to come back again soon. We are journeying together during this 40 day Lenten season to the cross. Today we look the authentic life at home and church.

Lent 4 Wednesday Service

(The congregation is invited to respond with the words written in **bold**.)

The Ringing of the Bells

Opening Hymn: "Lord of All Hopefulness"

LSB 738

Invocation

P: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Litany for the Home & Confession & Absolution

P: "Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good" (Romans 12:9). Just as Jesus was moved with **compassion** for the helpless crowds, seeing them as sheep without a shepherd (Matthew 9:36).

C: Lord, lead us in the way of Your truth.

P: "Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor" (Ephesians 4:25). Just as Jesus praised Nathanael as a man in whom there was **no deceit** (John 1:47).

C: Lord, lead us in the way of Your truth.

P: "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts" (Psalm 139:23). Just as Jesus remained **faithful** to His mission, quoting Scripture to resist temptation in the wilderness (Luke 4:1-13).

C: Lord, lead us in the way of Your truth.

P: "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (1 Timothy 1:5). Just as Jesus, the **true vine**, is the only genuine source of life and joy for those who abide in Him (John 15:1-5).

C: Lord, lead us in the way of Your truth.

P: "Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). Just as Jesus' **teachings** were always perfectly aligned with His actions, fulfilling the Law and the Prophets in every word (Matthew 5:17).

C: **Lord, lead us in the way of Your truth.**

P: "Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? ... If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10). Just as Jesus prioritized the **Father's will**, even in the face of immense suffering in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:39).

C: **Lord, lead us in the way of Your truth.**

P: "You can't hide behind a religious mask forever; sooner or later the mask will slip and your true face will be known" (Luke 12:2). Just as Jesus challenged **hypocrisy**, calling for the removal of the log from one's own eye before judging another (Matthew 7:5).

C: **Lord, lead us in the way of Your truth.**

P: "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Just as Jesus, full of **grace and truth**, offers a new and abundant life to all who follow Him (John 1:14; John 10:10).

C: **Lord, lead us in the way of Your truth.**

P: "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Just as Jesus lived as the **light of the world**, openly declaring His mission to seek and save the lost (John 8:12; Matthew 18:11).

C: **Lord, lead us in the way of Your truth.**

(Silence for Confession:)

P: Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C: **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. Forgive us for our lack of compassion, our deceit, our unfaithfulness, for our failure to remain in the Vine, for our failure to live what we believe, for hypocrisy. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

P: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

First Reading Isaiah 29:13-16

P: A reading from Isaiah the twenty-ninth chapter.

¹³And the Lord said: “Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor me with their lips, while their hearts are far from me, and their fear of me is a commandment taught by men, ¹⁴therefore, behold, I will again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder upon wonder; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their

discerning men shall be hidden.” ¹⁵Ah, you who hide deep from the LORD your counsel, whose deeds are in the dark, and who say, “Who sees us? Who knows us?” ¹⁶You turn things upside down! Shall the potter be regarded as the clay, that the thing made should say of its maker, “He did not make me”; or the thing formed say of him who formed it, “He has no understanding”?

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Second Reading 1 Peter 3:3-4

P: A reading from 1st Peter, the third chapter.

³Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair, the wearing of gold, or the putting on of clothing— ⁴but let your adorning be the hidden person of

the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God’s sight is very precious.

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Reading Matthew 23:26-27 & Matthew 26:6-13

P: A reading from Matthew, the twenty-third and twenty-sixth chapters.

²⁶You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

²⁷“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people’s bones and all uncleanness.

⁶Now when Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, ⁷a woman came up to him with an alabaster flask of very expensive ointment, and she poured it on his head as he reclined at

table. ⁸And when the disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? ⁹For this could have been sold for a large sum and given to the poor.”

¹⁰But Jesus, aware of this, said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a beautiful thing to me. ¹¹For you always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me.

¹²In pouring this ointment on my body, she has done it to prepare me for burial.

¹³Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will also be told in memory of her.”

P: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Hymn: “When I Behold Jesus Christ”

LSB 542

Sermon: “The Authentic Life at Home & Church ” Pastor James Travis

Apostles’ Creed

Offering of God’s People to their Beloved Savior Please place your offerings and welcome cards in the basket as it is passed by.

Prayers for the Church

P: Heavenly Father, creator of all things, we come to You in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We thank You for the gift of faith and for revealing the Christian life through Your Holy Word and the clear witness of the Gospel. O Lord, help us to understand that our justification comes by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

C: Lord have mercy.

P: Lord Jesus help us to live putting you first in our life. Keep us from trusting our selves for salvation. Empower us by Your Holy Spirit to live a life of true repentance and good works.

C: Lord have mercy.

P: Lord Jesus help us to be honest about our imperfections to not pretend that we are better than we are. Help us others to see our life and want to have You in their life and home also.

C: Lord have mercy.

P: Finally, dear Father, help us to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16). Let our authentic Christian life be a testament to Your grace, shining forth in love, truth, and obedience. Guide us in the way of sincerity, free from hypocrisy, so that our lives may glorify Your name. We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Lord’s Prayer

LSB 162

Benediction

P: The grace of our Lord + Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: Amen.

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